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****WRITE!**WRITE!**WRITE!**WRITE!****

No. 5

March 31, 1989

UNOPA NOTES HOTLINE

REMINDER from your Salary Issues Chairman

Please continue writing letters to members of the Appropriations Committee. Thank them for their support in the past and point out that continued support is needed in order to continue the progress that has been made.

If you have any friends or relatives elsewhere in Nebraska, please encourage them to write also.

WATCH THE NEWSPAPER! After you hear that the bill has left the Appropriations Committee, you may then start writing all of the individual members of the Legislature.

All Senators may be written at the State Capitol in Lincoln. Be sure to mention District number on the envelope. See last UNOPA HOTLINE for information on names and those on Appropriations Committee.

Please send me copies of your letters (Lorraine Moon, Rm 29 HAH, City Campus 0304.

A big THANK YOU to UNOPA Members who have already written.

If you have any questions, please call me at 2-3507.

Lorraine

ATTACHED IS A COPY OF MY STATEMENT TO THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE.

RECEIVED

APR 4 1989

UNOPA NOTES
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
12 Admin Bldg
Lincoln, NE 68588-0415

Linda D. Olson
12 Adm Bldg.
City Campus 0415

STATEMENT

Appropriations Committee

March 14, 1989

Presented by Lorraine Moon
Salary Issues Chairman, UNOPA
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

I am Lorraine R. Moon, Salary Issues Chairman for the University of Nebraska Office Personnel Association also known as UNOPA. Active membership in this Association is open to all persons engaged in secretarial, clerical, managerial, or business work at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. As the largest organization for support staff at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, our organization is often called upon to represent all members of the UNL office support staff. The total number of support staff at UNL is estimated at over 2200 including 666 secretaries, 149 agricultural research technicians, 253 custodians, 118 food technicians and 102 research technicians. Of this number, 848 full-time employees earn less than \$12,500 and 520 full-time employees earn less than \$10,900 per year.

As an organization, UNOPA is supportive of the budget request submitted by the Board of Regents. I believe the Regent's request is a prudent proposal for strengthening the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Maintaining excellence in education will reap benefits for all sectors of our state population.

Maintaining excellence is a team effort. The team consists of the citizens of the State of Nebraska, our Legislators, the Governor, the University of Nebraska Board of Regents, UNL faculty and staff. One of the purposes of UNOPA is to provide increasingly efficient service to our educational system. Our members share in maintaining this excellence by participating in a support role in the team effort.

Quite often our members provide the first impression of the University which many Nebraskans receive. We maintain the reception desks, answer the telephones, manage offices, supervise other personnel, perform accounting duties, and keep the offices running smoothly. This enables the faculty to focus their time on education, research, and service. Therefore, it is imperative that we attract and keep qualified staff to support the educational system and this will only be accomplished by adequate reimbursement for knowledge and skills.

The members of the University community appreciate the salary support they received during the last legislative session.

Despite the generous support we received from the Legislature, it is estimated that average salaries of clerical and service staff at UNL remain more than 9% behind those of comparable positions in Nebraska state government. When compared to similar positions in the broader Lincoln labor market, UNL clerical and service salaries are more than 20% behind the average. I appear before you today to ask, on behalf of the more than 2200 employees I represent, that you keep faith with us by funding the Regents three year salary improvement plan.

If we do not keep and attract qualified staff, we run the risk of becoming a training ground for the private sector and other state agencies. Let me give you an example. Recently, UNL lost one of its clerical staff to an industrial firm where she received a 23% salary increase, profit sharing, and a fully paid liberal benefits package. This individual, a 4 year employee was earning \$5.67 per hour. Her new position is comparable to that which she held while at UNL. The members of UNOPA are not asking that their salaries be commensurate to those in the private sector. Rather, we ask that our salaries be at least comparable to those paid our counterparts in state government.

Because the University has needs which must be met both inside and outside the classroom, many people including the Board of Regents and the Faculty Senate have gone on record as supporting meaningful salary enhancement for faculty and staff.

We now have an opportunity to continue working together as a team toward educational excellence. Every citizen of the State of Nebraska has an important share in their University and each receives some benefit from its education, research, and service.

We ask you, the Appropriations Committee, to continue the team effort. We have the opportunity to make a significant commitment to educational excellence, thus sending a clear message to the youth of the State of Nebraska, to the students at UNL, and to the faculty and staff of the University of Nebraska.

Senators, I have brought copies of my statement to your committee and will leave them for you. If you have any questions, I will be glad to answer them.

Thank you.